

## In the Claims

Please amend Claims 1, 3, 6, 11 and 18, as follows.

1 1. (Currently Amended). A hand extension ~~An athletic training device for blocking balls use in~~  
2 contacting a volleyball, comprising:

3 ~~a front layer intended to contact a ball;~~

4 a pad having planar front layer and a rear layer, said pad being engineered for absorbing an  
5 impact force ~~imparted on~~ of said volleyball against said front layer; said rear layer having a bottom  
6 end portion and a top end portion that is offset from said bottom end portion with a substantial length  
7 therebetween;

8 ~~an insert portion disposed between and secured to each of said front layer and said rear layer;~~  
9 ~~said insert portion being comprised of a relatively stiff material; and~~

10 a hand receiving portion having a palm side fixedly mated-secured to said ~~bottom end~~  
11 ~~portion of said rear layer for utilizing said substantial length of said rear layer for reaching said ball;~~  
12 said portion being shaped to receive a user's hand;

13 wherein said pad has a rearward flexibility substantially similar to the natural backward  
14 bending motion of a human hand.

15 ~~wherein at least said top end portion of said rear layer is deformable for substantially bending~~  
16 ~~rearward and absorbing said impact force of said ball, said top end portion for minimizing a~~  
17 ~~rotational force on the user's wrist via said hand receiving portion;~~

18 ~~wherein said rotational force tends to cause rotation of the user's hand about the user's wrist.~~

1        2. (Cancelled).

1        3. (Currently Amended). The ~~training~~ device of claim 1, ~~wherein said~~ which further comprises an  
2        insert portion between said front and rear layer ~~[[is]]~~ comprised of a plastic material.

1        4. (Previously Presented). The training device of claim 1, wherein said front layer and said rear  
2        layer are comprised of a foam material.

1        5. (Original). The training device of claim 4, wherein said rear foam layer is thicker than said front  
2        foam layer.

1        6. (Currently Amended). The training device of claim 1, wherein said insert portion is ~~designed to~~  
2        ~~provide some flexibility, but is stiff enough to prevent the ball from consistently passing over or~~  
3        ~~through the training device~~ flexible.

1        7. (Original). The training device of claim 1, wherein said insert portion is glued to said front layer  
2        on one side and is glued to said rear layer on the other side.

1        8. (Original). The training device of claim 4, further comprising:  
2               a covering surrounding said front foam layer, said insert portion, and said rear foam layer.

1        9. (Original). The training device of claim 8, wherein said covering is comprised of a fabric

material.

10. (Original). The training device of claim 1, wherein said hand receiving portion is configured in the shape of a glove.

11. (Currently Amended). A ~~volleyball blocking pad~~ for blocking a volleyball, comprising:

a foam portion;

a relatively stiff planar portion disposed in said foam portion;

an outer covering encapsulating said foam portion, said outer cover having a rear side with a bottom end portion and a top end portion that is offset a substantial distance from said bottom end portion; and

a hand-receiving portion having a palm side fixedly mated to said bottom end portion for utilizing said top end portion for blocking ~~a ball~~ said volleyball;

wherein at least said top end portion of said rear layer is deformable for substantially bending rearwardly and decreasing an impact force of said ~~ball so as to decrease a rotational force applied to the user's wrist~~ volleyball;

wherein said hand-receiving portion has a front palm side that is fixedly mated to said bottom end portion for directing a user's palm toward said front layer;

~~wherein said rotational force tends to cause rotation of the user's hand about the user's wrist;~~

wherein said hand-receiving portion is sized smaller than said foam portion and said stiff portion.

1 12. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said foam portion is comprised of a front  
2 foam portion and a rear foam portion.

1 13. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 12, wherein said relatively stiff portion is disposed  
2 between said front foam portion and said rear foam portion.

1 14. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 12, wherein said front foam portion is thinner than said  
2 rear foam portion.

1 15. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said relatively stiff portion is comprised of  
2 a plastic material that also provides some flexibility.

1 16. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said outer covering is removable.

1 17. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said hand receiving portion is configured in  
2 the shape of a glove.

1 18. (Currently Amended). A ~~volleyball blocking pad~~ for blocking a volleyball, comprising:  
2 an absorbing portion for absorbing some force of ~~a contacting~~ said volleyball, said absorbing  
3 portion having a top end portion and a bottom end portion that is offset a substantial length from said  
4 top end portion for reaching said contacting volleyball;  
5 a relatively stiff planar portion in communication with said absorbing portion to allow said

6 blocking pad to block said ~~contacting~~-volleyball, but still flex backward with respect to a user's  
7 hand; and

8 a hand receiving portion ~~in communication therewith~~ for receipt of said user's hand therein,  
9 said hand receiving portion having a front palm side that is fixedly coupled to said bottom end  
10 portion of said absorbing portion for directing a user's palm toward said absorbing portion, said hand  
11 receiving portion including a plurality of sleeves for receiving a plurality of fingers;

12 whereby said hand receiving portion extends from said bottom end portion of said rear side.

1 19. (Previously Presented). The athletic training device of claim 1, wherein said hand receiving  
2 portion has a plurality of sleeves for receiving a plurality of fingers.

1 20. (Previously Presented). The athletic training device of claim 1, wherein said hand-receiving  
2 portion has a front palm side that is fixedly mated to said bottom end portion for directing a user's  
3 palm toward said front layer.

1 21. (Previously Presented). The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said hand receiving portion has  
2 a plurality of sleeves for receiving a plurality of fingers.